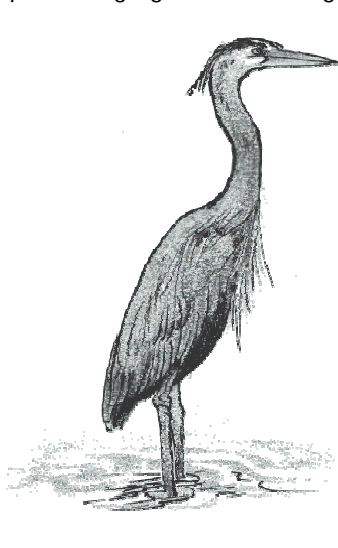


Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a USDA voluntary program for people who want to improve or develop fish and wildlife habitat on non-federal lands. The program is designed to provide both technical assistance and cost sharing to help establish and enhance habitat.

Landowners work with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to prepare and implement a wildlife habitat development plan. Depending upon the wildlife species of concern, partnering agencies and organizations may be

A detailed black and white illustration of a Great Egret standing in shallow water. The bird has long, thin legs, a long neck, and a sharp beak. Its feathers are intricately detailed with fine lines.

available to provide additional technical and financial assistance. NRCS can provide up to 75% of the costs of the planned practices to implement wildlife habitat improvements. There is **no** financial limit on WHIP contracts, although most average around \$15,000.

Wildlife Habitat Development Plans

The wildlife habitat development plan will describe the landowner's goals for improving habitat and list habitat improvement practices as well as a schedule for implementation. The landowner will enter into a cost-share agreement with NRCS that will last from 5 to 10 years. Landowners are reimbursed for practice installation costs after the practices are installed. Landowners agree to maintain the installed practices for the life of the plan. NRCS will conduct annual reviews of the plan with the landowners to monitor practice success or failure and determine if plan modifications are needed.

Funding and Target Areas

WHIP was reauthorized by the 2002 Farm Bill. Since 1998 NRCS has received over \$3 million to implement the program in New Jersey.

NRCS and partners in New Jersey have developed a state plan to target WHIP financial and technical assistance in several areas. Applications are accepted year-round for individual projects.

WHIP Priority Area

- Delaware Bay

The Delaware Bay counties of Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem, are globally important habitat for many migratory wildlife species and have been designated as a priority area for WHIP in New Jersey. Any wildlife habitat enhancement project in this priority area may be eligible for funding and technical assistance.

WHIP Priority Habitats

- Early Successional Habitat

Create, restore or manage for early successional habitats such as grasslands, savannahs and emergent wetlands that provide habitat for declining wildlife species. An emphasis will be placed on establishing native plant species, including those species that provide nectar, pollen and larval food sources for pollinators that will benefit agriculture in New Jersey.



- **Wetland Habitat**



Create, restore and manage wetland habitats including forested wetlands, coastal wetlands and riparian habitats. Focus is on land not likely to be funded by the Wetlands Reserve Program.

- **Disturbance-dependent Habitat**

Manage habitats that depend upon a natural or human-induced disturbance in order to create conditions suitable for regeneration or maintaining these unique habitats. Habitats such as Atlantic white cedar forests, scrub/shrub habitats and fire dependent plant communities are examples.

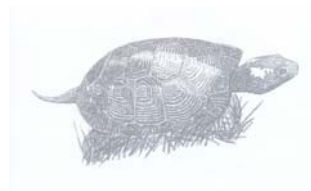


July 2006

WHIP Priority Species

- **Bog Turtle**

Enhance or maintain habitat for this federally threatened species that occurs on farms infrequently, throughout most of New Jersey.



Who Is Eligible?

To participate in WHIP, landowners must own or have control of the land under consideration. Land is not eligible for WHIP if it is currently enrolled in another USDA Farm Bill conservation program such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP). Land is also ineligible if it is used for mitigation or if the land is owned by the federal government.

For further information on WHIP or to sign up for the program, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service at your local USDA Service Center. Service Centers are listed in the telephone book under US Department of Agriculture. Program information and office location are also available online at <http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov>.

USDA Service Centers:

Freehold Service Center

4000 Kozloski Rd. Box 5033, Freehold, NJ 07728
Telephone: (732) 462-0075
Serves Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth counties

Frenchtown Service Center

687 Pittstown Rd Suite 2, Frenchtown, NJ 08825
Telephone: (908) 782-4614
Serves Hunterdon, Somerset and Union counties

Hackettstown Service Center

Bldg #1, 101 Bilby Rd, Hackettstown, NJ 07840
Telephone: (908) 852-2576
Serves Morris, Sussex and Warren counties

Hainesport Service Center

1289 Route 38, Hainesport, NJ 08036
Telephone: (609) 267-0811
Serves Burlington, Camden and Ocean counties

Somerset Office

220 Davidson Ave, Somerset, NJ 08873
Telephone: (732) 537-6057
Serves Bergen, Essex, Hudson, and Passaic counties

Vineland Service Center

1317 South Main Rd. Bldg 3, Vineland, NJ 08360
Telephone: (856) 205-1225
Serves Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties

Woodstown Service Center

51 Cheney Road, Suite 2, Woodstown, NJ 08098
Telephone: (856) 769-1126
Serves Gloucester and Salem counties